



U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

Bureau *of* Global Public Affairs | Office of Public Liaison

2023 Annual Report  
**ENGAGING AT HOME:**  
*Foreign Policy for  
the American People*



*Cover photo: Students at Morehouse  
College in Atlanta, Georgia give Secretary  
of State Antony J. Blinken a campus tour.  
Photo credit: Department of State.*

# Our Mission

The Department of State's domestic mission is to engage with Americans on the ways in which foreign policy impacts our day-to-day lives here at home. By connecting directly with communities around the country, the Department not only raises awareness about its work, but also gathers diverse perspectives that directly shape the Department's work. The Global Public Affairs' Office of Public Liaison conducts this community outreach through people-to-people engagements and programming.



Photo credit: Department of State

“

*When President Biden asked me to serve, he made sure that I understood that my job is to deliver for you – to make your lives more secure, create opportunity for you and your families, and tackle the global crises that are increasingly shaping your futures.”*

- Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken



# Connecting with the American People



Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken tours the CDC headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia. Photo credit: Department of State.

“

*Many Americans don't understand the work that the State Department does, or in some cases even realize that the Department exists. I think it's important that we highlight our role in furthering American interests across the globe in a way that demystifies foreign policy, provides a personal connection, and ultimately leads to a stronger interest recognizing the sacrifices that the men and women of the U.S. Foreign Service are making on behalf of their country.”*

- Jeffrey Willey, Diplomatic Security Special Agent

The State Department's Office of Public Liaison provides strategic guidance across the Department of State to raise awareness of our foreign policy priorities and share the work of our diplomats with the American people.

The team manages four flagship programs: Hometown Diplomats, Foreign Policy Classroom, Beyond the Podium, and outreach to historically underrepresented communities, including through the Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) conference.



## 2023 BUREAU OF GLOBAL PUBLIC AFFAIRS FLAGSHIP DOMESTIC OUTREACH PROGRAMS

## 16,000 People Reached



## HOMETOWN DIPLOMAT EVENTS



## BEYOND THE PODIUM SPEAKERS

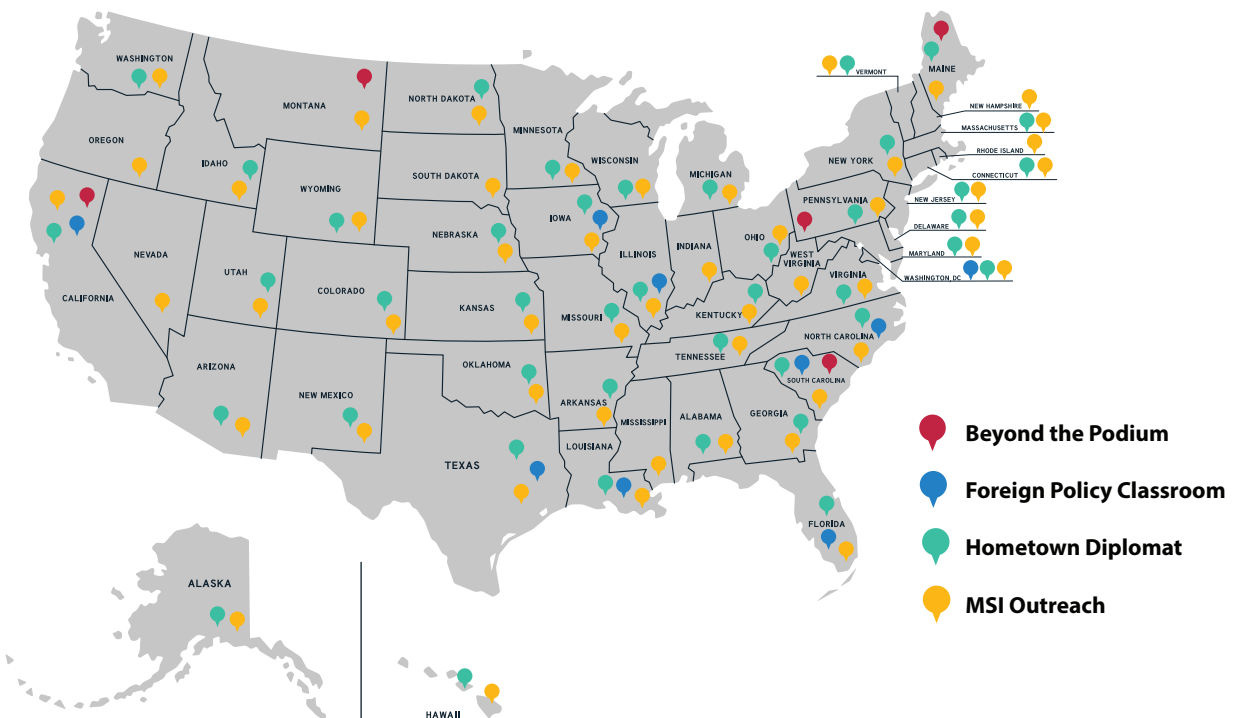


## FOREIGN POLICY CLASSROOMS



## FIRST-EVER MSI CONFERENCE

## ACROSS THE U.S. IN 2023



# Hometown Diplomats

For over 20 years, Hometown Diplomats has reached thousands of Americans and serves as one of the best ways to connect diplomats with students and local community organizations. More than 2,300 Foreign Service and Civil Service employees have gone to their hometowns or alma maters and engaged with American audiences about their work in Washington and around the world. Participants explain the Department's value and why diplomacy matters for their community by sharing details about their own careers and experiences. The program helps tell the story of U.S. diplomacy and furthers the Department's goals of building a diverse, inclusive, resilient, and dynamic workforce.

## 170 HOMETOWN DIPLOMAT EVENTS

**153** SCHOOLS & UNIVERSITIES

**17** SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS, UNDERSERVED COMMUNITY GROUPS & LOCAL NEWS

OVER **8700** PEOPLE REACHED



Irvington High School, Fremont, CA. Photo credit: Department of State.



Bronx High School for Medical Science, NYC. Photo credit: Department of State.



Virginia Beach Friends Meeting, Quaker community, Virginia Beach, VA. Photo credit: Department of State.

“

*We have an obligation to serve the American people and they are interested to learn more about what we do. It's also a win-win because we can use our time to talk with people in our hometowns about what we do, and we feel more connected to those communities.”*

- Sarah Wardwell, Foreign Service Officer

# Outreach Programs



Department of State employees meet students at the Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) Student Conference. Photo credit: Department of State.

“

*Our students learn about the U.S. government and sometimes the material might seem abstract and distant. But in today's class, the U.S. government came alive!”*

- Faculty member at California State University, San Bernardino

**Foreign Policy Classroom:** Convenes U.S. high school, undergraduate, and graduate students at Department headquarters and virtually to discuss pertinent foreign policy issues with subject matter experts.

**Beyond the Podium:** Connects subject matter experts from the Department with diaspora groups, academic institutions, civic organizations, business interest groups, Rotary and Kiwanis clubs, Sister Cities, World Affairs Councils, and other groups from around the country.

**Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) Student Conference:** In 2023, the Department hosted its first-ever conference for students and faculty from MSIs, building on the previously held HBCU conference. The hybrid symposium featured panel discussions on career opportunities, diplomacy, and foreign policy priorities. Over 1,400 people from all 50 states joined the event.



# Beyond the Beltway



Senior Department leaders engage with school groups at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH. Photo credit: Department of State.



Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Richard R. Verma speaks at a naturalization ceremony in Roseville, CA. Photo credit: Department of State.



Ambassador Julianne Smith, U.S. Permanent Representative to NATO, meets with Metro Detroit Model United Nations (MeDMUN) students. Photo credit: Department of State.



Assistant Secretary Bill Russo is interviewed by Rhiannon Rashidi, the Editor in Chief of the student newspaper at the City University of New York (CUNY). Photo credit: Department of State.

“

*Every day at the State Department, we are focused on addressing the global challenges that have the most direct and consequential impact on Americans' livelihoods and well-being. That is why our domestic engagement is so important. It not only gives us the chance to share our work and the ways it delivers for communities across the country, it also gives us the chance to listen and learn.”*

- Assistant Secretary for Global Public Affairs Bill Russo

In a 2021 speech at the Foreign Service Institute, Secretary Blinken said, “I’ll be asking all senior officials to make domestic travel and engagement a greater priority... We’re going to reach out much more regularly to civil society groups, private companies, state and local governments, community organizations, universities, and we’ll make sure that we’re connecting with people from different parts of the country—urban and rural—because our mission isn’t to serve some Americans, but all Americans.”

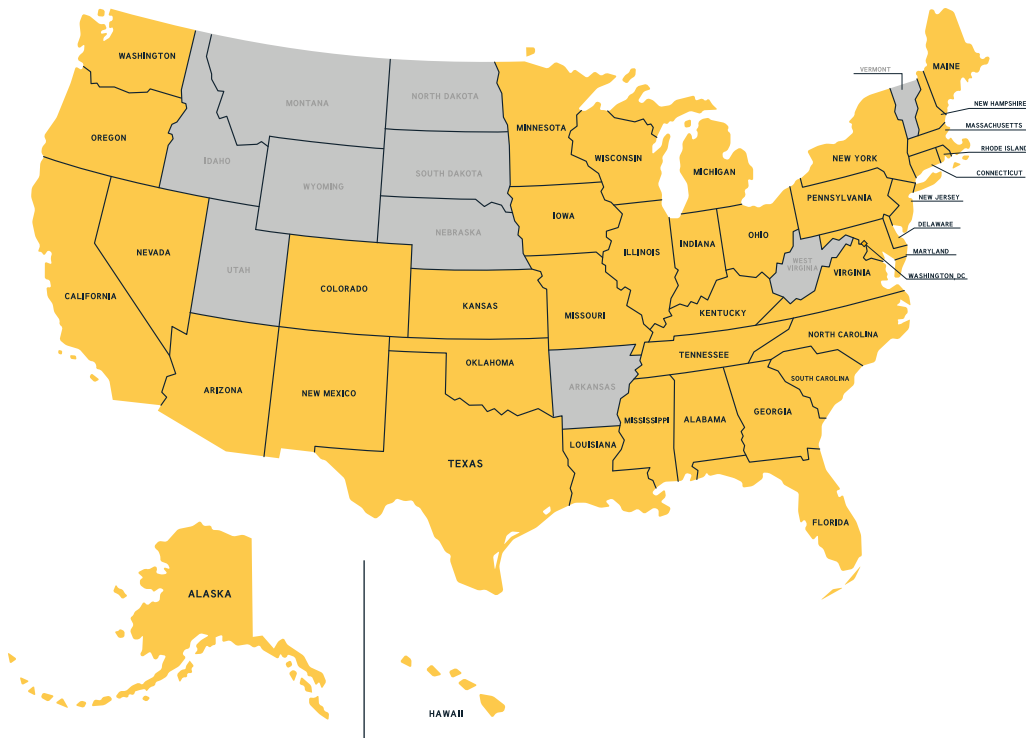
# MAPPING 2023

# 40

## STATES VISITED BY DEPARTMENT OF STATE SENIOR OFFICIALS

# 1400

## EVENTS



“

*When our fellow Americans ask what we are getting in return for our investments abroad, we can point to tangible benefits for American families and communities, even as we spend less than one percent of our federal budget on diplomacy and global development.”*

- Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken

# Collaboration on Domestic Outreach



Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken and Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens visit Refuge Coffee in Atlanta, Georgia. Photo credit: Department of State.

**Subnational Diplomacy:** To advance the Biden Administration's goals for Foreign Policy for the Middle Class and to make foreign policy work for all Americans, in October 2022, Secretary of State Blinken appointed Ambassador Nina Hachigian as the first Special Representative for City and State Diplomacy and established the Subnational Diplomacy Unit. To learn more, visit: <https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-economic-growth-energy-and-the-environment/the-secretarys-office-of-global-partnerships/the-special-representative-for-subnational-diplomacy>.

**Diplomats in Residence (DIRs)** are career Foreign Service Officers located across the United States and responsible for providing guidance and advice to students, professionals, and communities about careers at the Department. DIRs are available to answer questions and share insight with those interested in Foreign and Civil Service careers, internships, and fellowships. To learn more, visit: <https://careers.state.gov/connect-with-a-diplomat/text-only> or <https://careers.state.gov>.

**The Office of Press Operations** supports the President and Secretary of State by explaining the foreign policy of the United States and the positions of the Department of State to domestic and foreign journalists. To learn more, visit: <https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-public-diplomacy-and-public-affairs/bureau-of-global-public-affairs/office-of-press-operations>.

**The Bureau of Legislative Affairs (H)** coordinates all legislative activity for the Department of State and proudly serves as the Department's main interlocutor to Congress. In 2023, H broke a record and supported 3,478 separate engagements, including 48 interactions between the Secretary and Congress, 589 Congressional trips overseas, a record 106 hearings, and 505 Congressional report submissions. In addition, H worked to confirm a total of 210 confirmations since 2021. <https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/secretary-of-state/bureau-of-legislative-affairs>.

**Diaspora Voices** is an interactive event series that gives diaspora organizations the ability to engage with top diplomats about the challenges directly affecting their communities and opens the dialogue for opportunities to work with the Department of State to address them. To learn more, visit: <https://www.state.gov/diaspora-voices>.

**Diplomacy Lab** is a partnership between the Department of State and more than 50 colleges and universities across the United States. Student teams conduct research in collaboration with Department officers and present findings and foreign policy recommendations to domestic bureaus and global posts. Diplomacy Lab underscores our commitment to engage the American people in foreign policy and the need to broaden perspectives in response to a proliferation of complex global challenges. To learn more, visit: <https://www.state.gov/diplomacy-lab>.



*Back cover photo: Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman participates in a Culinary Diplomacy event at Southern Food and Beverage Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana, Photo credit: Department of State.*



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Scan to learn more about who we are, discover diplomacy, learn about foreign policy and careers, and travel the world.



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<https://register.state.gov/contactus/>

